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FOR ACTION

COUNTRY PROGRAMME RECOMMENDATION**

Panama

Addendum

SUMMARY

The present addendum to the country note submitted to the Executive Board at its first regular session in January 1996 contains the final country programme recommendation for Board approval.

It contains a recommendation for funding the country programme of Panama which has an annual planning level of $1,000,000 or less. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board approve the amount of $3,750,000 from general resources, subject to the availability of funds, and $6,250,000 in supplementary funds, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 1997 to 2001.

* E/ICEF/1996/18.

** The original country note provided only indicative figures for estimated programme cooperation. The figures provided in the present addendum are final and take into account unspent balances of programme cooperation at the end of 1995. They will be contained in the "Summary of 1996 recommendations for general resources and supplementary funding programmes" (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.43/Add.2).

BASIC DATA
(1994 unless otherwise stated)

Child population (millions, 0-15 years)	0.93
U5MR (per 1,000 live births)	20
IMR (per 1,000 live births)	18
Underweight (% moderate and severe) (1992)	7
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births) (1990)	55
Literacy (%, male/female) (1995)	91/90
Primary school enrolment (%, net male/female) (1990)	91/92
Primary school children reaching grade 5 (%) (1990)	82
Access to safe water (%) (1993)	89
Access to health services (%) (1994)	70
GNP per capita	$2,670
One-year-olds fully immunized against (1994):	
tuberculosis:	95 per cent
diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus:	83 per cent
measles:	84 per cent
poliomyelitis:	83 per cent
Pregnant woman immunized against:	
tetanus:	..

THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN AND WOMEN

1. The country note on Panama presented to the Executive Board at the first regular session of 1996 (E/ICEF/1996/P/L.26) emphasized the persistence of serious social economic disparities. Rural inhabitants, particularly the country's 200,000 indigenous people, are largely marginalized from the benefits of progress and development. Government policies are currently addressing this problem and aim to decentralize social programmes and increase investments and social spending in the "left behind" municipalities. However, the Government still needs assistance in designing effective interventions, targeting the utilization of resources, monitoring impact by gender and building capacity for planning and expanded service delivery in the poorest areas. Increased awareness of social disparities and knowledge of child and women's rights by the public at large are necessary to sustain social policies. At the local level, the mobilization of community participation is crucial to sustaining social projects.

2. A recent report on the mid-decade goals shows that goals have been achieved for child immunization, neonatal tetanus, poliomyelitis, diarrhoeal diseases (using a pre-1993 definition), water and sanitation, and basic education. In 1996, it is likely that the goals for the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, the reduction of deaths due to acute respiratory infections (ARI) and the consumption of iodized salt will be reached. Protein-energy malnutrition levels have been reduced, but the monitoring system needs improvement in order to provide reliable data on the progress made. Monitoring of immunization of women against neonatal tetanus also needs to be improved as data is not available. Vitamin A deficiency is concentrated in specific districts and is not a public health problem in Panama. The goals for the year 2000 for infant and maternal mortality, respectively 12.4 per 1,000 live births and 26 per 100,000 live births, will not be reached if the trends of 1990-1994 continue. Additional efforts are required in rural areas. The decade goals for water and sanitation and primary education may be reached by reallocating governmental resources to less developed areas.

3. In the metropolitan areas, juvenile crime and use of drugs are increasing, and public reactions tend to disregard children's rights to protection. Recent studies indicate that the probability of children and adolescents getting involved in illegal acts is eight times higher for those not taking part in educational activities, and that boys are 10 times more frequently involved in crime, drugs and violent behaviour than girls. As of 1996, about 1,000 cases of AIDS had been reported. Panama ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990 and, in 1995, submitted its first report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which will review it in late 1996. The recently approved Family Act still needs to be fully harmonized with the provisions of the Convention.

PROGRAMME COOPERATION, 1992-1996

4. The first country programme of cooperation between the Government of Panama and UNICEF was linked to subregional projects and contemplated some support for virtually all the goals of the World Summit for Children.

5. UNICEF communication and social mobilization support was instrumental in the creation of Foro Mujer y Desarrollo (FMD) (Forum on Women and Development) and Pacto por la Niñez (Pact for Children). Both initiatives include representatives from public institutions and civil society. With other United Nations agencies, technical assistance was provided to FMD to prepare a national plan for women and development which is greatly influencing governmental policy-making. Training for journalists on the Convention on the Rights of the Child led to the creation of an association of journalists from all major media institutions which has become a most valuable UNICEF partner in social consciousness-raising. This programme was financed partially by the Special Adjustment Facility for Latin America and the Caribbean.

6. In health and nutrition, UNICEF provided decisive technical assistance for policy development, legislation and communication; funding for educational material and training; and procurement of monitoring equipment and medical supplies to support the mid-decade goals. Collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) and the Spanish Cooperation Agency has been effective in immunization. Technical support also was provided to the health commission of Pacto por la Niñez and the preparation of a rural health programme funded by the World Bank. Scarce supplementary funding limited opportunities to support capacity-building and empowerment in rural communities with the greatest need.

7. In water and sanitation, UNICEF provided technical assistance and training for community participation, low-cost technologies and cost-recovery. UNICEF assisted in the development of a fibre-glass latrine production plant managed by a non-governmental organization (NGO), as well as with community-based environmental education and a revolving fund to finance sanitary facility improvements for low-income urban families. UNICEF supported the elaboration of participation and education components in a major rural project funded by the World Bank and developed municipal plans for water and sanitation in areas with the lowest coverage. Funding was provided by the Government of Sweden through the subregional programme.

8. In education, UNICEF advocated for the right to education for indigenous people and disabled children, which are recognized by the new education bill of 1995. UNICEF and the Government of Canada have funded pilot bicultural education projects for indigenous populations; this experience is under evaluation and is likely to be expanded with government funding. The Ministry of Education's analysis and implementation of community-based alternatives to

expand preschool services were supported by UNICEF and the Organization of American States. These alternatives were incorporated in the Government's funding requests to international lending institutions.

9. UNICEF, with funding from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), has provided technical assistance and training for NGOs and government agencies to improve integrated services for urban working children and those living in institutions. Reintegration into the educational system has become a core objective for all partners. Situation analyses funded by UNICEF have mobilized the Government to review its policies and subsidies for institutional services, as well as broad participation in the Protection and Development Commission of the Pacto por la Niñez, which successfully defended the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child when proposals for severe punishment of juvenile offenders were discussed and finally rejected by the Legislative Assembly in 1995.

Lessons learned

10. The country note discussed evaluations and reviews which showed that centralized services for disabled children are not sustainable; management of the expanded programme on immunization needs to improve coordination between central and local levels; local water committees need more training in planning, operation and maintenance; the children in especially difficult circumstances programme does not respond to the distinct situation of indigenous children; and a gender perspective needs to be incorporated into planning and monitoring by public institutions.

11. The continuing programming process has revealed that deficient monitoring is a major constraint to effective targeting of interventions and resources in the social sectors. The review of subregional programme components showed that these initiatives facilitate horizontal cooperation between countries and help to mobilize high-level political will. However, too many programmes and projects at subregional and country levels create complex administrative and management structures.

RECOMMENDED PROGRAMME COOPERATION, 1997-2001

Estimated annual expenditure

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Total
General resources						
Child and women's rights promotion	154	199	199	260	260	1 072
Education and life skills	64	154	154	154	154	680
Municipal social development	203	60	60	-	-	323
Programme support	329	337	337	336	336	1 675
Subtotal	750	750	750	750	750	3 750
Supplementary funding						
Child and women's rights promotion	250	300	450	300	300	1 600
Education and life skills	150	200	300	200	150	1 000
Municipal social development	500	750	1 000	750	650	3 650
Subtotal	900	1 250	1 750	1 250	1 100	6 250
Total	1 650	2 000	2 500	2 000	1 850	10 000

Country programme preparation process

12. Preparation of the proposed country programme of cooperation was coordinated by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Policy and was based on the findings of the mid-term review, the situation analysis of children, adolescents and women and lessons learned during the past period of cooperation. The situation analysis, the preliminary strategy paper and the country note were reviewed in meetings convened by the Government and benefited from suggestions made by other United Nations agencies, government counterparts and partner NGOs. In addition, various consultations were held with partners in the preparation of the master plan of operations. Briefings were held with resident missions which have shown a particular interest in UNICEF work in Panama.

Country programme objectives and strategy

13. The Government's socio-economic policies for the remainder of the decade will try to improve equity in income and wealth and to redirect resources for social investments in the poorest areas. A priority is to improve the quality of education and expand basic services to population groups in absolute poverty, especially children and women.

14. The objectives of the proposed programme of cooperation are to assist the Government in the reduction of social disparities through the following: (a) implementation of the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the achievement of the decade goals; (b) development of information management systems to monitor the realization of the rights of children and women and attainment of the goals; (c) improved protection of children at high risk through increased education; (d) increasing awareness of communities and children themselves about the rights of the child; and (e) support for the expansion of coverage of basic services in the poorest municipalities.

15. The specific expertise of UNICEF on children and gender and its proven capacities for social communication and mobilization will be crucial in reaching these objectives. However, overall social progress and development will depend on the cooperation of other United Nations agencies, bilateral partners and international lending institutions and, in particular, on the use of national human and financial resources.

16. The strategic mix will be built around a cross-cutting advocacy and social mobilization strategy to increase the awareness and sensitivity of the general public, politicians and economic leaders of the situation of children and women and to mobilize national resources for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. At the national level, the other important strategic element will be capacity-building through technical assistance and training activities for improved planning, monitoring and evaluation. In the 15 poorest rural municipalities and low-income metropolitan communities, priority will be given to the transfer of knowledge and skills to empower people to participate in local projects, use social services and exercise their rights. Improved planning and management skills are also important at this level.

17. Government resources and cooperation with IDB and the World Bank will help to meet the costs of infrastructure, equipment, supplies and personnel needed for service delivery.

18. An emerging strategy for local fund-raising is based partly on the fact that income raised through the sale of UNICEF greeting cards increased by 400 per cent over 1992-1995 to gross $110,000 in 1995. The dissemination of more information to the business community could mobilize participation in, and

funding of, UNICEF-supported projects. There is already some indication that programmes benefiting especially marginalized urban children and youth could attract local private sector contributions.

Child and women's rights promotion

19. Advocacy, social communication and mobilization activities and policy-making will be coordinated by Secretaría Técnica del Gabinete Social (STGC) (Technical Secretariat of the Social Sector Ministries). UNICEF assistance will help to sustain commitment to the World Summit for Children goals, raise awareness of the principles of the two Conventions and help to mobilize national resources to implement them. Top priority will be given to mobilization of popular support for a comprehensive Children's Act, which would complete harmonization of national legislation with the Convention on the Rights of the Child through cooperation with the mass media and advocacy to leaders of public opinion. Technical support for legislative reforms will be provided through UNICEF offices in other locations, such as the regional office. The National Pact for Children, which organizes both public institutions and NGOs, will be supported through technical assistance and training on the Convention, particularly the issue of integrated protection. UNICEF will support the production of materials and events in order to mobilize the participation of private enterprise, trade unions and political parties in the Pacto por la Niñez.

20. FMD and other organized groups promoting equality and equity between men and women through legislative reforms and social economic policy adjustments will be supported through exchange of experience and knowledge with similar initiatives at Central American and regional levels. Technical assistance to the Ombudsperson for Human Rights will aim to build capacity for monitoring the implementation of the rights of children and women.

21. Assistance to STGC will include help to improve general information management and, in particular, monitoring of the World Summit goals and other social indicators. Universities and other centres of knowledge will be linked to an information system on the situation of children and women, and they will be supported in selected policy research related to the two Conventions. Supplementary funding will be required to support the re-engineering of public institutions and training to follow up and implement legislative reforms.

Education and life skills

22. UNICEF support to the education and life skills initiative will help to generate new opportunities for children and adolescents in low-income urban communities to complete primary education with 15 primary schools and 12,000 students and 400 teachers. The programme aims to reduce repetition and drop-out rates and create alternative primary education programmes for children who are more than two years behind in terms of age/grade and adolescents aged 12 to 17 years who have not completed sixth grade. These adolescents also will be offered life skills training.

23. UNICEF will provide training and technical assistance to local school administrators and teachers to build capacity to deal with issues such as the prevention of violence, drugs and adolescent pregnancy and to increase sensitivity towards girls' needs and the education for all students on gender roles and equality. Training will promote the principles of the two Conventions as a code of conduct for teachers. UNICEF support to schools will include educational materials, in addition to support for the mobilization and organization of community groups composed of parents' groups, churches, NGOs and private enterprise.

24. NGOs working with out-of-school youth will receive technical assistance and funding for life skills training programmes with a gender perspective. Emphasis will be on helping boys to develop and strengthen concepts of justice, fairness and sensitivity and on preparing them for responsible parenthood. In addition, girls will be motivated to develop personal ambitions beyond motherhood and to seek non-traditional career opportunities. With PAHO/WHO, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF will offer all partners education on HIV/AIDS and reproductive health. General resources will be used to support the initiatives described in paragraph 22 above. Supplementary funds will expand support to NGOs in order to broaden community participation.

Municipal social development

25. In rural municipalities with social indicators that are below the national averages, the Government's aim, by the year 2000, is to reduce social disparities through the attainment of the World Summit goals for mortality reduction, nutrition, water and sanitation and primary education. Achieving these municipal goals is fundamental for reaching the national decade goals.

26. The objective for UNICEF assistance is to help 15 municipalities with indigenous populations to plan, manage and implement increased government investments for expanding basic services. This programme supports the Government's policy of decentralization and capacity-building for the reduction of disparities. The programme will cover a population of 300,000, of whom 48,000 are children under the age of five years, 51,000 are children in the primary school-age group and 120,000 are women of child-bearing age.

27. Technical assistance and training will be given to the local governments to build capacity for the assessment and monitoring of the local situation of women and children and to develop integrated municipal social development (MSD) plans. These plans will complement and facilitate the implementation of other new governmental projects which contemplate major investments in infrastructure in less developed communities. Empowerment of community members through the transfer of basic knowledge on issues of child health and development will help to create demand for services and sustain the MSD plans. UNICEF will support local governments in the mobilization of municipal committees for the defence and promotion of child rights and provide technical assistance and training to local social service deliverers.

28. Support to the water and environmental sanitation component of the MSD programme will be organized in a specific project linked to UNICEF subregional activities and will include cooperation with other Central American municipalities. Special emphasis will be given to women's participation in the preparation of bicultural hygiene educational material and the planning, operation and maintenance of facilities and services. Other health interventions will include the production of materials on breast-feeding, oral rehydration therapy, immunization, ARI, nutrition, child growth, safe motherhood and women's health, in addition to the training of institutional personnel, volunteers and community organizations. In bicultural preschool and primary education, UNICEF assistance will help to train teachers and motivate parents to get involved in their children's education. General resources will be used in 1997 to support the development and implementation of four MSD plans in municipalities where water and sanitation plans already have been developed, using funds provided by the Government of Sweden. After 1997, supplementary funding will be required to expand UNICEF support to all 15 municipalities.

29. Major partners supporting this programme include PAHO, other United Nations agencies and bilateral donors.

Subregional initiatives

30. The country programme will coordinate efforts with UNICEF subregional programmes in water and sanitation and micronutrients. Water and sanitation interventions will be implemented within the framework of the MSD programme referred to in paragraphs 25-29 above and will be reinforced and complemented by subregional support mechanisms. Micronutrient interventions will be undertaken through the subregional micronutrient programme.

Monitoring and evaluation

31. During 1997, the implementing partners in all programmes will be supported to define indicators and verifiable outcomes of all projects. The annual participatory evaluation and planning exercise will decide on specific actions to be carried out the following year. A mid-term review of this programme of cooperation will be organized with the Government to be elected in 1999 in order to adjust the programmes to the Government's overall plans and priorities. This meeting will assess the funding situation for each programme and may decide to reallocate general resources as well as to initiate discussions on alternative models for UNICEF cooperation with Panama beyond the year 2001.

Programme management

32. Implementation of the country programme will be coordinated by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Policy with support from the consultative technical committee of each programme. These committees will include all relevant governmental institutions, partner NGOs, PAHO/WHO, UNFPA, the International Labour Organisation and UNICEF. Donors and relevant bilateral cooperation agencies also will be invited to the meetings of these committees. A small office in Panama will administer UNICEF support and provide technical assistance in coordination with subregional initiatives and UNICEF staff in other locations. Particularly close cooperation will be established with the UNICEF office in Costa Rica.

TABLE

LINKAGE OF PROGRAMME BUDGET AND STAFFING/STAFF COSTS

COUNTRY : PANAMA
PROGRAMME : 1997-2001

PROGRAMME SECTION/AREAS AND FUNDING SOURCE	PROGRAMME BUDGET (In thousands of US dollars)				POSTS a/										STAFF COSTS b/ (In thousands of US dollars)		
	GR	FSF	NSF	TOTAL	D2/L7	D1/L6	P/L5	P/L4	P/L3	P/L2	IP	NP	GS	TOTAL	IP	LOCAL	TOTAL
GENERAL RESOURCES :																	
CHILD AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS PROMOTION	1,072			1,072	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	0	0.5	0.0	157.6	157.6
MUNICIPAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	323			323	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
EDUCATION AND LIFE SKILLS	680			680	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	0	0.5	0.0	157.6	157.6
PROGRAMME SUPPORT	1,675			1,675	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	3	5	784.8	616.9	1,401.7
TOTAL GR	3,750			3,750	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	3	6	784.8	932.1	1,716.9
SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING :																	
CHILD AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS PROMOTION		0	1,600	1,600	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.0	133.0	133.0
MUNICIPAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT		0	3,650	3,650	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0.0	384.6	384.6
EDUCATION AND LIFE SKILLS		0	1,000	1,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
PROGRAMME SUPPORT		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL SF		0	6,250	6,250	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0.0	517.6	517.6
TOTAL GR & SF	3,750	0	6,250	10,000	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	5	9	784.8	1,449.7	2,234.5
ADM. & PROGRAMME SUPPORT BUDGET	Operating costs			0.0													
	Staffing				0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
GRAND TOTAL (GR+SF+ADM)					0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	5	9	784.8	1,449.7	2,234.5
Number of posts and staff costs:																	
Current programme cycle											1	3	5	9			
At the end of proposed programme cycle (indicative only)											1	3	5	9	784.8	1,449.7	2,234.5

GR = general resources.
SF = supplementary funding.
FSF = funded supplementary funding.
NSF = new supplementary funding.
IP = international Professional.
NP = national Professional.
GS = General Service.
ADM = administrative.

a/ Each post, regardless of its funding source, supports the country programme as a whole.
b/ Exclude temporary assistance and overtime; include costs of United Nations volunteers.